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University of Dayton

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News

News / University to dedicate new building, Fitz Center space



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WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 2, 2019

University to dedicate new building, Fitz Center space

The University of Dayton Fitz Center for Leadership in Community will move to its new space alongside the Dayton Foundation and Dayton Development Coalition at 1401 S. Main St. and host a building dedication and blessing during a public ceremony at 2 p.m. Oct. 17.

Hunter Goodman, executive director of the Fitz Center, said the move will enhance the center's mission to bring community partners and university faculty, staff and resources to the same table, and to develop student leaders with work that continues between semesters.

"Everything about the new building has been designed in a spirit of collaboration," Goodman said. "We now have an opportunity to be the front porch to the University for our community partners. It takes us to the next level and allows us to build on who we are."

The building includes office space for the Fitz Center, Dayton Foundation and Dayton Development Coalition, and offers multipurpose rooms that can be used for community meetings, events and university classes.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for community organizations to find better ways to collaborate and knock down walls between sectors," said Jessica Saunders, director of community engagement at Dayton Children's Hospital, a Fitz Center partner for Dayton Public Schools' Kiser Elementary Neighborhood Schools Center.

"It's also a great opportunity for students to really be exposed to Dayton and all that it has to offer," said Saunders, a University alumna and former Fitz Center graduate assistant. "Through my experience with the Fitz Center, I met some people that I still work with to this day. With those connections, when it's time to graduate, you consider staying in Dayton. That's a value that the Fitz Center has to Dayton."

The move makes the Fitz Center for Leadership in Community more visible and accessible at a time when the University is working to forge deeper community collaboration with greater impact as part of its strategic vision.

“Our partnership is growing in a way that’s personal. It’s one-on-one with our residents,” said Donna Davis, acting president of the Madden Hills Neighborhood Association, which has worked with Fitz Center students since 2017 to renovate and upgrade the Madden Hills Park.

In a new program this year, the neighborhood association meets monthly with students in the Fitz Center’s Leadership in Building Communities class to examine neighborhood issues.

“I see the Fitz Center as the leader and role model for the city of Dayton in its efforts in building community/neighborhood relationships. The Fitz Center class is working toward the greater good by teaching and developing tomorrow’s leaders so they’re equipped to obtain neighborhood insight, build and develop better communities for the future,” Davis said.

Eleven full-time Fitz Center staff, six graduate assistants and up to 10 undergraduates will work in the new building. Additionally, more than 200 students involved in Fitz Center programs — including Dayton Corps AmeriCorps, River Stewards, Dayton Civic Scholars and Semester of Service — will be connected to the space.

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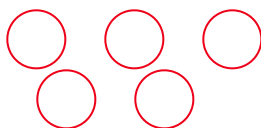
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